

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for setting up a universal remote control having command keys, a transmission circuit for transmitting commands in response to activation of one or more command keys,
5 and a receiver circuit for receiving RF transmissions, the method comprising:
 receiving data from an RFID tag via the receiver of the universal remote control; and
 using the data received from the RFID tag to cause select commands to be mapped to
select command keys whereby the universal remote control is setup such that activation of
one or more of the select command keys causes the universal remote control to issue via the
10 transmission circuit one or more of the select commands to command operation of an
appliance that has been associated with the RFID tag data.
2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the RFID tag data comprises data that identifies
command codes in a command code library.
- 15 3. The method as recited in claim 2, comprising using the data received from the RFID tag to
cause select commands from a library locally stored on the universal remote control to be
mapped to select command keys.
- 20 4. The method as recited in claim 2, comprising using the data received from the RFID tag to
cause select commands from a library stored remotely from the universal remote control to
be downloaded into the universal remote control and mapped to select command keys.

5. The method as recited in claim 4, comprising establishing a connection with the library directly from the universal remote control.
6. The method as recited in claim 4, comprising establishing a connection with the library by means of an intermediate device.
7. The method as recited in claim 6, wherein the intermediate device comprises a cable set top box.
8. The method as recited in claim 6, wherein the intermediate device comprises a personal computer.
9. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the RFID tag data comprises an EPC number.
10. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the RFID tag data comprises Appliance Type data and Appliance Designation Number data.
11. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the RFID tag data comprises data that identifies a unique user of the universal remote control.
12. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the RFID tag data comprises data that identifies functions supported by an appliance.

13. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein the universal remote control has an operational mode selectable via activation of a mode key and wherein at least one of the select commands is mapped to at least one of the select command keys only when the universal remote control is placed in the operational mode via actuation of the mode key.

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14. A method for setting up a universal remote control having command keys, a transmission circuit for transmitting commands in response to activation of one or more command keys, and a receiver circuit for receiving RF transmissions, the method comprising:

receiving data from a plurality of RFID tags via the receiver of the universal remote control; and

using the data received from each of the RFID tags to cause select commands to be mapped to select command keys whereby the universal remote control is setup such that activation of one or more of the select command keys causes the universal remote control to issue via the transmission circuit one or more of the select commands to command operation of an appliance that has been associated with the data received from each of the RFID tags.

15. The method as recited in claim 14, wherein the data received from each of the RFID tags comprises data that identifies command codes in a command code library.

16. The method as recited in claim 15, comprising using the data received from at least one of the RFID tags to cause select commands from a library locally stored on the universal remote control to be mapped to select command keys.

17. The method as recited in claim 15, comprising using the data received from at least one of the RFID tags to cause select commands from a library stored remotely from the universal remote control to be downloaded into the universal remote control and mapped to select command keys.

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18. The method as recited in claim 17, comprising establishing a connection with the library directly from the universal remote control.

19. The method as recited in claim 17, comprising establishing a connection with the library
10 by means of an intermediate device.

20. The method as recited in claim 19, wherein the intermediate device comprises a cable set top box.

15 21. The method as recited in claim 19, wherein the intermediate device comprises a personal computer.

22. The method as recited in claim 14, wherein the data received from each of RFID tags comprises an EPC number.

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23. The method as recited in claim 14, wherein the data received from each of the RFID tags comprises Appliance Type data and Appliance Designation Number data.

24. The method as recited in claim 14, wherein the data received from each of the RFID tags comprises data identifying functions supported by a corresponding appliance.
25. The method as recited in claim 14, comprising receiving the data from each RFID tag
5 within an area of radio communication with the remote control.
26. The method as recited in claim 14, comprising using the data received from each of the RFID tags to automatically map select commands to select command keys in select operational modes of the universal remote control, the operational modes being selectable to
10 cause a single, corresponding appliance to be a primary target of commands transmitted from the universal remote control.
27. The method as recited in claim 14, comprising receiving user input to map select commands to select command keys in select operational modes of the universal remote
15 control, the operational modes being selectable to cause a single, corresponding appliance to be a primary target of commands transmitted from the universal remote control.
28. The method as recited in claim 14, comprising using the data received from each of the RFID tags to automatically map select commands to select command keys in a mode of the
20 universal remote control such that a plurality of appliances are simultaneously commandable when the universal remote control is placed into the mode.
29. The method as recited in claim 28, wherein the mode comprises a home theater mode.

30. The method as recited in claim 28, wherein the mode comprises a room mode.

31. The method as recited in claim 14, further comprising transmitting from the universal remote control an RF signal to initiate the receiving of the data from the RFID tags.

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32. A method for setting up a universal remote control having command keys, a transmission circuit for transmitting commands in response to activation of one or more command keys, and a receiver circuit for receiving RF transmission, the method comprising:

receiving data from an RFID tag via the receiver of the universal remote control, the
10 data from the RFID tag being unique to an individual;

using the data received from the RFID tag to configure the universal remote control wherein activation of one or more of the command keys causes the universal remote control to issue via the transmission circuit one or more commands to command operation of one or more appliances as established by one or more preferences that have been mapped to the
15 individual represented by the data received from the RFID tag.

33. The method as recited in claim 32, comprising using the data received from the RFID tag to display command keys according to one or more preferences established for the individual represented by the data received from the RFID tag.

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34. The method as recited in claim 32, wherein using the data to configure the universal remote control comprises limiting access to command keys by the individual represented by the data received from the RFID tag.

35. The method as recited in claim 32, wherein using the data to configure the universal remote control comprises making a favorite channels list accessible for the individual represented by the data received from the RFID tag.

5 36. The method as recited in claim 32, wherein the preferences are stored locally on the universal remote control.

37. The method as recited in claim 32, wherein the preferences are stored remotely from the universal remote control.

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38. The method as recited in claim 37, comprising establishing a connection with a server having the remotely stored preferences.

15 39. The method as recited in claim 38, comprising establishing the connection by means of an intermediate device.

40. The method as recited in claim 39, wherein the intermediate device comprises a cable set top box.

20 41. The method as recited in claim 39, wherein the intermediate device comprises a personal computer.

42. A readable media having instructions for setting up a universal remote control having command keys, a transmission circuit for transmitting commands in response to activation of one or more command keys, and a receiver circuit for receiving RF transmissions, the instructions performing steps comprising:

5 receiving data from an RFID tag via the receiver of the universal remote control; and
 using the data received from the RFID tag to cause select commands to be mapped to
 select command keys whereby the universal remote control is setup such that activation of
 one or more of the select command keys causes the universal remote control to issue via the
 transmission circuit one or more of the select commands to command operation of an
 10 appliance that has been associated with the RFID tag data.

43. The readable media as recited in claim 42, wherein the RFID tag data comprises data that identifies command codes in a command code library.

15 44. The readable media as recited in claim 43, wherein the instructions perform the step of
 using the data received from the RFID tag to cause select commands from a library locally
 stored on the universal remote control to be mapped to select command keys.

 45. The readable media as recited in claim 43, wherein the instructions perform the step of
 20 using the data received from the RFID tag to cause select commands from a library stored
 remotely from the universal remote control to be downloaded into the universal remote
 control and mapped to select command keys.

46. The readable media as recited in claim 45, wherein the instructions perform the step of establishing a connection with the library directly from the universal remote control.

47. The readable media as recited in claim 45, wherein the instructions perform the step of
5 establishing a connection with the library by means of an intermediate device.

48. The readable media as recited in claim 47, wherein the intermediate device comprises a cable set top box.

10 49. The readable media as recited in claim 47, wherein the intermediate device comprises a personal computer.

50. The readable media as recited in claim 42, wherein the RFID tag data comprises an EPC number.

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51. The readable media as recited in claim 42, wherein the RFID tag data comprises Appliance Type data and Appliance Designation Number data.

52. The readable media as recited in claim 42, wherein the RFID tag data comprises data
20 that identifies a unique user of the universal remote control.

53. The readable media as recited in claim 42, wherein the RFID tag data comprises data that identifies functions supported by an appliance.

54. A readable media having instructions for setting up a universal remote control having command keys, a transmission circuit for transmitting commands in response to activation of one or more command keys, and a receiver circuit for receiving RF transmission, the instructions performing steps comprising:

5 receiving data from an RFID tag via the receiver of the universal remote control, the data from the RFID tag being unique to an individual;

 using the data received from the RFID tag to configure the universal remote control wherein activation of one or more of the command keys causes the universal remote control to issue via the transmission circuit one or more commands to command operation of one or
10 more appliances as established by one or more preferences that have been mapped to the individual represented by the data received from the RFID tag.

55. The readable media as recited in claim 54, wherein the instructions perform the step of using the data received from the RFID tag to display command keys according to one or
15 more preferences established for the individual represented by the data received from the RFID tag.

56. The readable media as recited in claim 55, wherein using the data to configure the universal remote control comprises limiting access to command keys by the individual
20 represented by the data received from the RFID tag.

57. The readable media as recited in claim 55, wherein using the data to configure the universal remote control comprises making a favorite channels list accessible for the individual represented by the data received from the RFID tag.

5 58. The readable media as recited in claim 55, wherein the preferences are locally stored on the universal remote control.

59. The readable media as recited in claim 55, wherein the preferences are stored remotely from the universal remote control.

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60. The readable media as recited in claim 59, wherein the instructions perform the step of establishing a connection with a server having the remotely stored preferences.

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61. The readable media as recited in claim 60, wherein the connection is established by means of an intermediate device.

62. The readable media as recited in claim 61, wherein the intermediate device comprises a cable set top box.

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63. The readable media as recited in claim 61, wherein the intermediate device comprises a personal computer.

64. A readable media having instructions for setting up a universal remote control having command keys, a transmission circuit for transmitting data, and a receiver circuit for receiving RF transmission, the instructions performing steps comprising:

receiving data from an RFID tag via the receiver of the universal remote control, the
5 data from the RFID tag being unique to an individual; and

forwarding the data received from the RFID tag to an appliance via the transmission circuit whereby the appliance utilizes the data to configure the appliance according to one or more preferences that have been mapped within the appliance to the individual represented by the data received from the RFID tag.

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65. The readable media as recited in claim 64, wherein the data is utilized within the appliance to limit access to an appliance function.

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66. The readable media as recited in claim 64, wherein the appliance function is utilized to access content.

67. The readable media as recited in claim 64, wherein the data is included as a part of a command transmission to the appliance.

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68. A method for setting up a universal remote control having command keys, a transmission circuit for transmitting data, and a receiver circuit for receiving RF transmission, the method comprising:

receiving data from an RFID tag via the receiver of the universal remote control, the data from the RFID tag being unique to an individual; and

forwarding the data received from the RFID tag to an appliance via the transmission circuit whereby the appliance utilizes the data to configure the appliance according to one or more preferences that have been mapped within the appliance to the individual represented by the data received from the RFID tag.

69. The method as recited in claim 68, wherein the data is utilized within the appliance to limit access to an appliance function.

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70. The method as recited in claim 68, wherein the appliance function is utilized to access content.

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71. The method as recited in claim 78 wherein the data is included as a part of a command transmission to the appliance.

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72. A method for setting up a universal remote control having command keys, a transmission circuit for transmitting commands in response to activation of one or more command keys, and a receiver circuit for receiving RF transmissions, the method comprising:

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receiving data through RF transmissions from a plurality of RFID tags via the receiver of the universal remote control, each RFID tag being associated with a different individual;

determining relative signal strength of the RF transmissions; and

using data received from the RFID tag corresponding to the RF transmissions having the greatest relative signal strength to cause select commands to be mapped to select command keys whereby the universal remote control is setup such that activation of one or more of the select command keys causes the universal remote control to issue via the transmission circuit one or more of the select commands to command operation of one or more appliances as established by one or more preferences that have been mapped to the individual represented by the used data.

73. The method as recited in claim 72, comprising displaying command keys according to one or more preferences established for the individual represented by the used data.

74. The method as recited in claim 72, comprising limiting access to command keys by the individual represented by the used data.

75. The method as recited in claim 72, comprising making a favorite channels list accessible for the individual represented by the used data.

76. The method as recited in claim 72, wherein the preferences are stored locally on the universal remote control.

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77. The method as recited in claim 72, wherein the preferences are stored remotely from the universal remote control.

78. The method as recited in claim 73, comprising establishing a connection with a server having the remotely stored preferences.

79. The method as recited in claim 78, comprising establishing the connection by means of
5 an intermediate device.

80. The method as recited in claim 79, wherein the intermediate device comprises a cable set top box.

10 81. The method as recited in claim 79, wherein the intermediate device comprises a personal computer.